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SUMMARY

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOUSING PROGRAMMES AND ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOUSING PROGRAMMES AND ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

by

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INTRODUCTION

Very few of the countries undergoing development have established a real housing policy coordinated with their development plan. In framing a policy of this kind, together with the action programmes by which it is to be implemented, due consideration should be given to:

- the needs of the population;

- possible methods of achievement;

- economic and social effects of the programmes.

It should also form part of a general development policy for the whole territory.

I. DEVELOPMENT OF THE TERRITORY

A housing programme should be drawn up on a long-term basis; a dwelling is in fact real estate and is in principle lasting.

Long-term plans (at least 10 years) should indicate in general terms the distribution of the population and families (i.e. family groups to be housed) according to the country's main regions, and should distinguish between the towns (at least the largest of them) and the rural areas.

The geographical areas adopted must have a sociological significance

II. NEEDS OF THE POPULATION

In studying needs, a distinction should be made between the various sociological backgrounds, and in particular between rural and urban conditions.

The following procedure can be adopted:

(a) Undertake first of all a qualitative sociological study of the habits and wishes of families.

(b) This could be followed by a first technical survey of the types of homes adapted to the needs and desires of the inhabitants, while at the same time effecting some progress towards an improvement regarded as desirable.

(c) Then, with plans of specimen homes and information as to the cost of building and/or renting, it would be possible to carry out statistical studies, including if necessary population surveys to determine the basic requirements of a housing programme.

Consideration may be given to: *

- objective needs, calculated on the basis of housing standards considered desirable;

- demand expressed by the population (especially in the towns);

- demand which can be satisfied, with due regard to specific types of homes, family incomes and the family's attitude to housing.

As an example we shall describe a statistical study of this kind, including spot checks, in a North African Mohammedan community which has recently become urbanised.

III. POSSIBLE METHODS OF ACHIEVEMENT

This deals with researches requiring close cooperation between the architect, engineer, administrator and sociologist, all four assumed to have a complete knowledge of the economic and social data of the region or town under consideration.

Types of homes have to be sought which are adapted to the possibilities of the country, both as regards material required and building methods.

Research should cover more than the mere definition of a type of home and should go a good way towards town planning.

IV. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF PROGRAMMES

Effects differ according to the period covered by the plan.

- Short-term:

  - effect on the activity of the building industry and allied trades;

  - possible labour-saving methods;

  - search for formulas which procure maximum internal added value for the country;

  - social objective of improved living conditions.

- Medium-term:

  - The economic effects of a housing programme are practically nil. This stresses the importance of ensuring a certain continuity in carrying out the programmes, and also the vulnerability of programmes financed from public and/or external funds. Generally speaking, overall economic development cannot be based on a housing plan.

- Long-term:

  - The economy should benefit from the general improvement in the living standards of the population. In this connection housing has the same kind of effect - difficult to put in exact figures - as education and health.

V. CONCLUSION

The conclusion deals with the links existing between these various types of analysis, leading to practical recommendations.

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* See La demande solvable de logements en milieu urbain by Jacques Antoine: document submitted to the International Institute of Statistics, Paris, September 1961.

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